

Maurice Hinchey NEWS

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HINCHEY TOUTS REDEVELOPMENT OF KINGSTON WATERFRONT

KINGSTON - U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey (NY-26) today led a tour of the Kingston waterfront area as part of his effort to promote its development. Hinchey and Kingston Mayor James Sottile were accompanied by representatives of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which administers a program to redevelop brownfields.

"The waterfront is a wonderful resource for the City of Kingston," said Hinchey. "But much of it could be put to more appropriate and beneficial use. I'm happy to see that the city is looking at alternative uses for these properties and I'm looking forward to assisting in that effort. Familiarizing EPA with the sites is an important first step."

Brownfields are moderately contaminated sites, typically in urban areas, where redevelopment is complicated by environmental contamination. It is estimated that there are 450,000 brownfields sites nationwide. EPA initiated a program to address these sites and awarded the first brownfields assessment grant in 1993. By the end of fiscal year 2000, the agency had made grants to 362 communities including a coalition of Hudson Valley communities.

In January 2002 a new law authorized Congress to spend \$250 million a year from 2002 through 2006. The law also clarifies liability issues associated with brownfields and removes significant barriers to participation.

"The expansion of the brownfields program creates an excellent opportunity for communities to remove environmental hazards and relieve the pressure to develop open space and farmland, while creating jobs and boosting the economy," Hinchey added. "The Kingston waterfront provides the perfect example of how these new tools can be put to effective use."